

Spot Checking

Food ★ Fun ★ Frolic
By Bill Whitman

Wally Botello Introduces Sam's Cafe

The long awaited opening of South Bay's newest and certainly most lavish dinner house will at last become a reality tomorrow when Wally Botello will officially open the doors of Sam's Cafe at 3210 Sepulveda Blvd. in Torrance.

Built somewhat along the same general lines as his now famous Velvet Turtle at Catalina and Ave I in Redondo Beach, Sam's Cafe will boast a seating capacity in excess of 200 for luncheon and approximately 175 for the dinner trade. It's of step-down construction, the same as the Turtle, with the expansive and beautifully decorated plus richly carpeted dining salon to the right as you descend the broad stairs, and the cocktail bar and lounge to the left.

Where the wine-cellar type room at the Velvet Turtle is located will be the intimate and friendly piano-bar just off the main bar at Sam's. Architect Emerson Hansen has followed along the lines of the Turtle (which he also designed) with but few exceptions, including the location of the large kitchen in the rear and with the open kitchen out front in plain view of the patrons.

Mr. Botello has spared no

expense in bringing to Torrance one of the most beautiful restaurants in the Southland and he's no "charly-come-lately" to the food business, having spent the past 10 years in the area bringing superb cuisine and quality service to the many dine-outers in the South Bay.

He opened his Velvet Turtle in August, 1964 which was an instant success and prior to that his many Wooden Shoe Coffee Shops for which he is so well known. Wally's not stopping here, however. At the moment he has definite plans for ground-breaking ceremonies for a new Velvet Turtle in the San Jose area and still another in Atlanta, Ga. some time in 1968.

General Manager of the Botello Enterprises and Manager of the new Sam's Cafe will be Bob Burnett with whom Wally attended school in their native Oakland. Assisting in the managerial capacity will be still another long-time associate of Botello Enterprises, Joe Brachitta.

Always an important cog in any restaurant wheel will be Executive Chef Al Robage, who has been Chef de Cuisine at the Velvet Turtle since its inception while his wife, Julie will move from the Turtle to be headwaitress at Sam's.

Still another well-known and long-time member of the culinary field in and around the South Bay Area will be Phil Keyes who will be installed as Bar Manager for the new dinery. Sam's Cafe is a bright new spot on the Torrance horizon, sparkling like a brilliant gem in the sea of landscaping as only Landscape Artist Dick Gawne can present.

With ample parking, quality food, fast, efficient service and prices to meet the present day needs, Sam's Cafe is destined for a fantastically successful future.

Store hours for the new spot will be from 11:30 in the morning daily and from 3:30 in the afternoon on Sundays.

Would seem that The Matador in West Los Angeles has a bumper crop of bull fighters. Or at least, two.

Top-side bartender, "Kiki" at the main bar of Bill Fremont's delightful Spanish restaurant spent some time in the bull ring as did bartender

relish dish and a choice of Gazpacho soup or tossed green Romaine salad. Try it next time you're at The Matador.

Booked in for an indefinite stand is Red Norvo at the new Ramada Inn Restaurant and Cocktail Lounge.

Now here's a cat that goes 'way back in the musical world and especially from the jazz stand-point. You may not know this but Red was the first musician to demonstrate the possibilities of adapting jazz to the Xylophone. He later switched to the Vibraphone and is now best known as a Vibes man, although his first instrument back in his native Illinois was piano.

Norvo's appeared with all the greats and near-greats of the music business for "minny, minny" years and is still regarded as one of the top jazz men in the country.

Get by The Ramada Inn one of these nites soon and get yourself entertained with Red Norvo and his Trio in the lounge. There's dancing, too.

Hey now, y'll remember the bartender's bartender, Kenny Decker? Well since the Hunting Horn buttoned up and Kenny found himself on the outside, he felt it might behoove him to "get a job." So he hired himself on down Anaheim way and is now at The Kettle. So that's where the big man is, in case you're out on the prowl some nite and wish to exchange quips with the master.

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